

MINUTES OF THE MARDEN MEDICAL CENTRE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MEETING

March 28th 2024 7:00pm at Marden Medical Centre

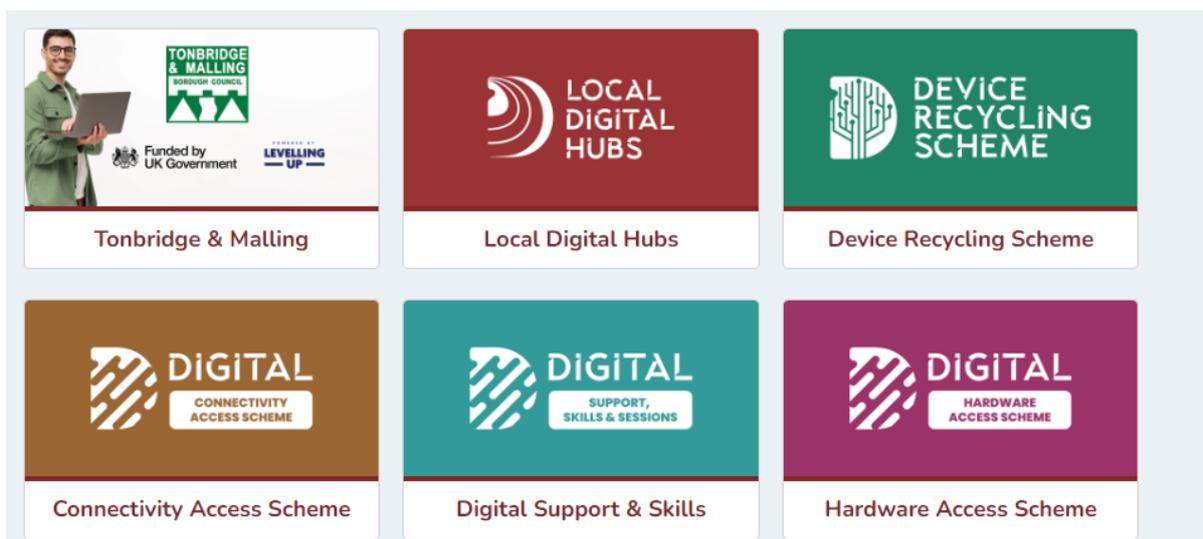
PRESENT. John Haddow, Chris Childs, Judy and Carroll Taylor, Kate and Graham Tippen, Sian Burr, Jenny Jones, Dr Julie Morgan, Brian Arbuckle, Eunice Doswell, Alison Fisher, Peter Kershaw, Gill Tarry, Julie Addison, Becki Thomas - KCC (16)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Julie West, Claire Courtley, Val Hesketh, Anne Boswell, Chris Barker, Lynn Childs, Mary-Jayne Bournes, Nick Ferguson-Gow, Annabelle Blackmore

TALK ON KCC'S DIGITAL KENT NHS DIGITAL HELP INITIATIVE- BECKI THOMAS

Beck Thomas provided the group with an excellent and informative talk on the work of KCC's Digital Kent including the new work stream with Kent and Medway NHS to promote digital use of the NHS app.

The NHS work incorporates Local Digital Hubs (in a number of KCC Libraries) and Digital Support sessions supported by Digital Champion volunteers. 12% of Kent residents are digitally excluded – *could be a higher %.*



More information on Digital Kent's work can be seen at <https://www.digitalkent.uk/>

QUESTIONS

Question related to if all patients supported by Digital Kent have their own devices? Answer was yes. If there is a need for equipment - Hardware Access (tablets) and Connectivity (free data sims) schemes could be used subject to some eligibility criteria. Discussion around housebound patients and the need for digital access. Dr Julie Morgan suggested that might be a piece of work MMC could do with Digital Kent – to identify and reach out to housebound patients to assess their digital needs and provide support.

Question related to how Digital Kent were measuring success of the programmes. 5,000 Kent residents have been helped. Becki agreed to provide the latest data for project success when it was produced.

Support for community projects, Involve Kent and carers – Becki keen to use new funding to help health inequalities. Foodbank follow up required to identify if there is a need for extra digital support. Becki and Dr Julie Morgan to discuss.

Capacity and capability question – ongoing support. Digital Kent can offer Digital Champion volunteers either via Digital Hubs or Digital Champions via 121 sessions to provide ongoing support. **Action:** Becki Thomas to supply latest data.

Assisted living could be location where digital assistance could be promoted.

Safeguarding of Digital Champions – enhanced DBS checked undertaken and Digital Unite training provided.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES.

The meeting was asked to approve the 14th December 2023 meeting minutes. A point was raised that in the Digital Access Drop-in report section on learnings the 10 patients helped with mobile phones – 9 had smartphones and 1 had a non-smart mobile phone. Not all therefore had smartphones. Thank you for the minor clarification. Minutes will not be re-issued. **Minutes Agreed.**

REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Comment and discussion on Virtual Wards programme included in BBC SE News on 13th December on the topic of winter NHS pressures. Should the PPG update group on what Virtual Wards or Hospital at Home? Information on MTW Virtual Ward service included in the April'24 PPG News Update. **Action closed.**

Health and Wellbeing Key Contacts List. Will be updated electronically only (no longer printed & distributed by MPC) and posted on the MPC website. Update in Q2'24. Action still open. **Action:** Anne Boswell and John Haddow to coordinate.

Question regarding digital-only triage – where a Practice has implemented online triage. Can appointments still be booked via the NHS app? **Action closed:** John Haddow to investigate.

Answer – if digital only triage is implemented online appointments from say the NHS app are automatically switched off.

New Digital Call System Reports. At the next PPG meeting Mary-Jayne to provide a full report from the new phone system for average call wait times, call drops, high demand times etc? **Action:** Open item for the next meeting in June.

It would appear extraction of simple reports from the new telephone system is proving challenging. As of 1.4.24 the K&M ICB are centrally monitoring all K&M Practice digital telephone systems on 8 key call metrics – call volumes, calls abandoned, call times to answer, missed call volumes, wait time before call abandoned, call backs requested, call backs made, average call length times. It is hoped this useful data can be made available for MMC, to review at our next meeting.

Some feedback on call records from Dr Richard Estall received before the meeting via email:

The comparative data from April 23 to February 24 shows a reduction in the total call volume at the peak time of day between 8 30 at 09:30 AM. This is a positive finding, and we hope may represent greater accessibility through other modes of communication such as online booking and electronic communication.

However the overall pattern of calls with the greatest volume in the morning and the second peak at 2 PM has not flattened as we may have hoped, and the volume of calls defer to later in the day has not increased significantly.

Whilst we are pleased that we may have reduced the overall call volume, It is somewhat disappointing to see that we have been unable to influence the time of day that people make non urgent calls.

It was noted that the new Callback function appears to be working well.

Should we not let patients know more information on the new callback feature added to the phone system? Patients can request a callback and they will not lose their slot in the queue and that the callback is automated by system. Patients are still waiting online. Action was John Haddow to update PPG members. Mary-Jayne to

consider updating wider patients via the website. **Action closed:** John Haddow and Mary-Jayne Bournes. Update provided via the December '23 PPG News Update – see below.

New Callback Function added to the Surgery Telephone System



The Surgery have added a Callback feature to the telephone system allowing you to request a callback rather than waiting in the queue. You will **not lose your place in the queue** by requesting a callback (via both a landline or mobile) – you will automatically be called back by the telephone system when you reach the top of the queue – typically within approx. 30 mins. Please use this feature to make the system more efficient and to avoid you wasting time waiting on the telephone.

PRACTICE UPDATE AND FRIENDS & FAMILY. Dr Julie Morgan presented the Surgery Report.

It has been another busy year during which we have been enormously grateful for the support of our patients and the community. We have been faced with rising demand for appointments whilst battling with the challenges of power outages, IT and phone upgrades, medication shortages and staff sickness!

Our list size is now sits at over 7500, this is the highest it has ever been. We are hoping for a period of some stability now the influx of new patients (largely driven from patients moving into the new developments) appears to have slowed.

Staff

We have a very hard-working and loyal staff team and, apart from welcoming our new paramedic practitioner, Neil Curtis, we have not seen any significant changes over the last 12 months

In terms of clinicians, we have 6 GPs, 2 paramedic practitioners, 3 nurses and an HCA (supported by a locum HCA who is a retired nurse). Both our paramedics are very experienced and have done additional qualifications to allow them to prescribe certain medications.

We have shared time of a clinical pharmacist who works with us two days per week. Over the last 12 months her role has expanded, and she is now managing patients with raised blood pressure and cholesterol as well as reviewing patients who require medication reviews. She is also a non-medical prescriber.

We are a training practice and have a GP registrar, visiting student nurses and paramedics.

We are supporting 2 clinicians through their advanced clinical practitioner training which will enable them to extend the care they give patients. Our HCA is undertaking general practice assistant training, which will enhance both patient care and the support she is able to give clinicians.

We host the midwife, counsellors, and specialist diabetes nurses. West Kent dementia support services are visiting us on a regular basis. We host an NHS ultrasound service once weekly.

Access

The new phone system is now fully operational and working well. The new technology has enabled us to analyse data which shows when demand is highest and shows how promptly calls are answered. There has been positive feedback on the callback facility.

Demand for appointments is very high and we are constantly monitoring and reviewing our appointment system to ensure that we have adequate capacity and the correct balance of acute (for those problems that require same day assessment) vs pre-bookable appointments.

Although our appointment availability is good when compared with national levels, demand is high, and we are always keen to ensure that you are seen by the person or service who can best help you in an appropriate timeframe: this will not necessarily be a GP. Our reception team have all been trained to offer to refer patients to other NHS services without the need to speak to a GP. These include the acute primary care ophthalmology service, first contact physiotherapy and our excellent local pharmacies

The quickest way to access your results, request repeat prescriptions, book appointments and view other aspects of your medical record is via the NHS App. We have been pleased to see use of the App increase to **63%**.

We are part of Weald Primary Care Network (PCN), which includes practices from Staplehurst, Cranbrook, Yalding, Hawkhurst, Lamberhurst and Brenchley. The Practices share expertise, training systems, decision-making, and some clinical care. The PCN employ Clinical Pharmacists, Social Prescribers, Physiotherapists, Children's Health and Wellbeing Coordinators, Mental Health Practitioners, Care Coordinators and Physicians Associates.

We are making increasing use of the expertise and skill mix that this team can offer our patients. We have also been grateful for the increased appointment capacity that has been offered through the extended hours scheme and winter hub clinics.

Prescription for Nature

We have collaborated with our Patient Participation Group (PPG), Marden Wildlife and Marden Parish Council to develop the Prescription for Nature Project in Marden.

The approach is based on growing evidence that spending time in natural spaces can have positive effects on physical and mental health including reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and loneliness. We were keen to develop a local scheme which encourages people to connect with the beautiful countryside and nature spots we have in and around Marden but also to engage with the enthusiasm and expertise of the local wildlife, nature, and wellbeing groups in the village.

Patients who may benefit from the scheme will have an initial discussion with a healthcare professional on the benefits of nature, supported by a leaflet (or prescription) with self-paced suggestions to connect with local nature resources.

When you come into the surgery, please also enjoy the beautiful nature photos in the corridor at the end of the building. These were kindly donated by local wildlife enthusiast, Darren Nicholls.

Priorities over the coming months

We had a very successful Autumn Covid and Flu vaccination campaign which we could not have done without the support of our Patient Participation Group. We will be participating in the Spring Covid Booster campaign. With an emphasis on prevention, we are also focusing on recall of patients for shingles, measles and whooping cough immunisations and cervical screening. We are also contacting any patients who have not had a BP check in the last 12 months.

We have signed up to the RCGP's Green Impact for Health Toolkit and are proactively looking at ways that we can improve our sustainability, reduce our carbon footprint and adapt to climate change.

Protect General Practice

There is mounting concern that General Practice is under threat. We are very concerned by the imposition of the latest GP contract proposal and offer of a 2% uplift in funding, this represents a funding cut. There is a very real concern that services will be cut and GP surgeries close. These are some simple stats which demonstrate the scale of the problem. Since 2015:

Over 1000 practices gone

Over 2000 GPs gone

Over 6,000,000 more patients on the books

The value of GP contract has eroded by £620million compared with five years ago.

Equivalent of 1:2 population seen EACH month.

400 million consultations per annum

GP only receives 7-8% of NHS funding

We are not immune to these threats as your GPs we want our patients to know that we want to be there for you and your family whenever you need us. But this is getting harder and harder. We are awaiting the result of the BMA referendum on whether the contract will be rejected by the profession. Please look out for updates on our website and Facebook page over the coming weeks.

Summary Friends & Family Patient Satisfaction Results for Jan - March '24

<p>Friends and Family Test Results January 2024</p> <p>In response to the question: How likely are you to recommend our GP practice to friends and family?</p> <p>87.5% Very good 10.2% Good 2% Neither good nor poor 0.3% Poor % Very poor % Don't know</p> <p>Total = 319</p> <p>Ticked very good x 279 Ticked good x 33 Ticked neither good nor poor x 6 Ticked poor x 1 Ticked very poor x 0 Don't know x 0</p> <p>Do Not Publish x 94 No comment x 31</p>	<p>Friends and Family Test Results February 2024</p> <p>In response to the question: How likely are you to recommend our GP practice to friends and family?</p> <p>92% Very good 7% Good 1% Neither good nor poor % Poor % Very poor % Don't know</p> <p>Total = 276</p> <p>Ticked very good x 253 Ticked good x 19 Ticked neither good nor poor x 4 Ticked poor x 0 Ticked very poor x 0 Don't know x 0</p> <p>Do Not Publish x 81 No comment x 31</p>	<p>Friends and Family Test Results March 2024</p> <p>In response to the question: How likely are you to recommend our GP practice to friends and family?</p> <p>90% Very good 7% Good 1% Neither good nor poor 2% Poor % Very poor % Don't know</p> <p>Total = 268</p> <p>Ticked very good x 241 Ticked good x 20 Ticked neither good nor poor x 5 Ticked poor x 2 Ticked very poor x 0 Don't know x 0</p> <p>Do Not Publish x 75 No comment x 36</p>
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Complaints – annual review held a few weeks ago. Theme. No significant complaints that needed to be escalated all complaints were handled in house. No complaints had resulted in patient harm. Theme – meeting of patient expectations – communication problems. The complaints were less about what happened but get communication of what happened.

QUESTIONS

Regarding Protecting General Practice. Comment from John Haddow on the 2% offer from the government to GP's via the 24/25 GP Contract as being inadequate as costs have been rising at 10/11%. Dr Julie Morgan indicated that GP strikes were unlikely but that the GPs had voted overwhelmingly (99%) to reject the governments new contract offer – GP's are legally required to accept the new contract.

Patients would want to know the impact of any GP actions – communication needs to be clear.

Pressure on GP time. Prescription checking – ideal approach is to order repeat prescriptions online via the NHS app. Paramedics are non-medical prescribers. GP's are only qualified to approve repeat prescriptions.

Via email – access to the Surgery Blood Pressure Monitoring machine @ the Surgery waiting room. The machine seems to be always unplugged. Is it used? Response from Dr Julie Morgan. Long story..... acquired pre-covid. Accuracy is a concern. Machine is in a public area. Dr Julie Morgan agreed to give the BP monitor 'another chance' and encourage use and or move its location.

Via email – Is there an update from MPC on the Community Allotment project as like Nature on Prescription – a Community Allotment could bring patients health & wellbeing benefits. **Action now closed:** John Haddow to check with Kate Tippen. S

After the meeting Kate Tippen pointed patients to the latest update in the MPC Spring'24 Newsletter:

<https://www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk/shared/attachments.asp?f=7ef653ca%2Da39e%2D401a%2D9669%2Dd5fbf5991844%2Epdf&o=Spring%2DNewsletter%2D2024%2DWebsite%2Epdf>

'Allotments at Highwood Green As ever, this project slowly grinds on and Highwood Green residents have been written to by Redrow about the transfer of the land to MPC. Redrow are currenting in negotiations with Maidstone Borough Council in regard to agreeing the S106 variation to allow the allotments to be transferred to the Parish Council which was discussed at the Full Council meeting on 13th February. Many apologies to all those residents who are waiting to get to work on their plots and hopefully we are on the way to the allotments being ready this year.'

Surgery communications seem to be primarily initially FB only - perhaps not getting to all patients. Could communications be released via the NHS app – as well? Response from Dr Julie Morgan. Not possible currently. Perhaps the Surgery *iplato* text messaging system could be used in combination with the MMC website and MMC FB. Suggestion that news updates be added to the Waiting Room Digital screen. **Action:** John Haddow to follow up with Mary-Jayne Bournes communications to patients.

Nature on Prescription – question on outcome/feedback of the project so far. Too early, but Dr Julie Morgan will provide feedback at the next meeting. **Action:** Dr Julie Morgan

PPG ACTIVITIES UPDATE presented by John Haddow.

9 Committee members in attendance.

- Quiet period with the PPG
- Nature on Prescription project supported
- New member acquisition appears to have stalled. Only 6 in 2024 to date. Virtual membership around 300. PPG application form in MPC Welcome Packs. Concern over age profile of members. Some work to do in 2024.
- Attended the West Kent PPG Chairs x2 meetings online – topics included Digital Access initiatives, Health Inequalities and Integrated Care Board projects (ICB).
- Brief discussion on the need for patient transport. Brenchley and Horsmonden PPG run a volunteer-based transport service. No real demand @ Marden and we should send patient requests via the Involve Community Transport scheme.
- Only 3-4 Practices in the Weald have active PPG's.
- 1 Weald PCN meeting attended – topic was the new 24/25 GP Contract. The Weald PCN could be more initiative-taking – resources dependant. John Haddow plans to discuss with the Clinical Director – Justin Charlesworth - still open from Dec'23. **Action:** John Haddow
- Requested Healthwatch to attend our next meeting. **Action:** John Haddow
- Community Forum call every 6 weeks continues to share Marden activities. The Foodbank could be a safe space to offer health & wellbeing support with patients. **Action:** John Haddow to follow-up with Rev Nicky and Dr Julie Morgan.

Q&A

John Haddow agreed to follow up with Peter Kershaw on broadband access challenges impact on digital exclusion in Marden – including guidance on mobile phone coverage both smartphone and non-smartphone as it relates to digital access in Marden. **Action:** John Haddow to discuss with Peter Kershaw and report back.

Next meeting & AGM 27th June 2024 at the Marden Vestry Hall 7:00-8:30pm

PROPOSED DATES FOR UPCOMING 2024/25 COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

27th June 2024 + AGM

26th September 2024

12th December 2024

27th March 2025